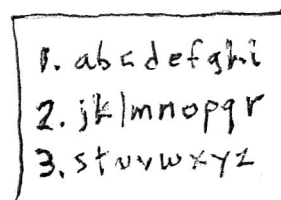


SEARCH FOR A MINIMAL PANLIST



ANIL

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A PANLIST is a list that contains the alphabet. It's like a pangram but counts number of items, not letters, and the goal is to find the list with the fewest. The list should be a natural "whole", not arbitrarily selected. Here are my best finds. Most have some failing so the winner isn't clear. I examined the common lists I could think of [i] and surveyed *The Book of Lists* '77 [BoL], the lists of species in Grzimek's *Animal Life Encyclopedia* '74 [Grz] and the 530 special lists in *Macquarie Thesaurus* '87 [MT]. The usual suspects JQXZ were most often limiting so I give their words.

BoL This like most of BoL is a subjective list of arbitrary length.

6-10 Clifton Fadiman's best 10 fiction books (*Jones*, *QuiXote*, *KaramaZov*). More contrived still, a select 6 of them cover the alphabet (add *Magic Mtn.*, *Huck Finn* and *War and P.*).

Grz These and the rest of the page are more natural lists and are presumed or definitely complete.

8-14 or **18-24+** turbot family, Scophthalmidae (*whiff-jagonis*, *aquosus*, *maximus*, *Zeugopterus*.) All letters occurred in the Latin names except K in the common names (topknot), so is it two lists (8 Latin, 6 common) for a 14? The fishbase website says there are **18** species in the turbot family without naming them, but Encyclopedia of Life online agrees with 8 species, also unnamed. Was Grzimek correct but lumped vis-à-vis fishbase, or knowingly incomplete, or outdated?

9-16 or **13-20+** rail babbler subfamily, Orthonychinae (*ajax*, quail thrush, Ranzani) These also entailed both Latin and common names (9+7). Wikipedia says 13 species, unnamed.

MT Possibly incomplete, especially the first.

16? sports: boxing and wrestling (jujitsu, boxing, prize-fighting; + Queensberry Rules, OK?) This list of 15 lacked a Q until I added one as another name for boxing. Okay? No?

30 breeds of cattle (Jersey, Blonde d'Aquitaine, Sussex, razorback)

i: These are definitely complete or up-to-date complete.

10 The Bill of Rights (jury, required, excessive, seized) How long can lists items be? At 461 words and (in Random House) 50 lines this one has the bulk of a list of 100-300 words, phrases, names or objects. For all that, it only contains one Q and two X and Z. Count it? I think not, else where to stop? The full volumes of a trilogy constitute a list. **3** beats 10.

36-37 US Presidents (John Quincy, Nixon, Zachary), 36 counting Cleveland only once. This panlist was completed by Nixon—who at last served a useful purpose! Or **43-44...** for those who insist on using the full list up to Obama. But the list's length is ever increasing (we hope) hence indeterminate. Should truncations of open-ended lists be disallowed? Should we disallow the *n* largest lakes and only accept a (varying) list of all "million" lakes?

In summary, using the loosest rules the winner is the list of **1** of any book or the **6** of Fadiman's 10. Among natural lists the **8-9** Grzimek animals (as presented) or the **10** Bill of Rights is the winner (so far). But I would limit the search to single-item and non-arbitrary lists, leaving three choices of **14-16** as the dubious winner and **20+**, **24+**, **30** or **36** the "sure pure" winner. Help!